

The role of historic town of Rhodes in the scenario of Ottoman and Italian rules to the light of iconographic sources

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## VI Convegno Internazionale di Studi

**CIRICE 2014**

**Città mediterranee in trasformazione**

**Identità e immagine del paesaggio urbano  
tra Sette e Novecento**



Edizioni Scientifiche Italiane



**CIRICE - Centro Interdipartimentale di Ricerca  
sull'Iconografia della Città Europea**

Università di Napoli Federico II

# **Città mediterranee in trasformazione**

*Identità e immagine del paesaggio urbano tra Sette e Novecento*

a cura di

Alfredo Buccaro, Cesare de Seta

Atti del VI Convegno Internazionale di Studi CIRICE 2014  
Napoli, 13-15 marzo 2014



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## *The role of historic town of Rhodes in the scenario of Ottoman and Italian rules to the light of iconographic sources*

**EMMA MAGLIO**

Laboratoire d'Archéologie Médiévale et Moderne en Méditerranée (LA3M), UMR 7298, CNRS-Université d'Aix-Marseille, Aix-en-Provence, France

### **Abstract**

*The town of Rhodes, the Hospitaller stronghold until the early modern period, was under the Ottoman 1522-1912) and Italian rule (until 1943), going through a long urban and architectural evolution. Iconography from the 18<sup>th</sup> to the 20<sup>th</sup> century, also in written production (travel narratives, tourist guides, magazines), illustrates the search for medieval souvenirs in the Islamic decadent town (18<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> c.) and the shifting of symbolic-geographic idea of city, linked to a new attitude towards historical heritage and to the creation of a new urban center (20<sup>th</sup> c.). This communication aims to trace the changing role of medieval town in Turkish and Italian ideology and urban practices. Particular attention will be given to the iconographic source, especially photography, as a useful tool for documenting the 19<sup>th</sup>-century Ottoman Rhodes as a travel destination, then replaced by the Italian city intended to be the "Eastern rampart" of the rising empire.*

### **Parole chiave:**

Islamizzazione, patrimonio architettonico, propaganda, impero italiano, fotografia.  
Islamization, architectural heritage, propaganda, Italian empire, photography.

### **Introduction**

At the end of the Balkan War in 1912, all the Aegean islands except for Rhodes were freed from Ottoman rule (1522-1912). The conflict for the possession of Libya brought the Italian occupation of the Dodecanese islands and Kastelorizo, which was ratified in the same year by the Treaty of Lausanne. In particular, the landing at Rhodes was an easy task, considering that a Turkish garrison of only 1,200 soldiers was on the island at that time. A second treaty of Lausanne in 1923, one year after the March on Rome of the fascist militias, allowed Italy to assert its sovereignty over the Southern Sporades: a further step in the construction of a colonial empire in Libya, Somalia, Ethiopia, Eritrea and Albania.

In a decade, the Italians inaugurated restoration and new building operations in the town of Rhodes and out of its medieval walls, after the Turkish rule had deeply modified the appearance of the Hospitaller stronghold. On 28 April 1920, a Royal Decree (n. 32) established the limits of the so-called 'Zona Monumentale'. It was about a strong legal act, both binding the historic town and the area outside the walls and legitimizing the construction of a new city elsewhere.

Since 1988, the medieval town of Rhodes was inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List: it was a different kind of delimitation as for modalities and aims, but equally focusing the town architectural heritage dating back to medieval and modern periods. Our aim is to observe how the role of built heritage changed, in the delicate transition from the Islamic to the Italian rule, as for the urban and the politico-economic space of the town. Like other island in the eastern Mediterranean, Rhodes was at the middle of several conflicts in the course of its history: architectural traces constitute a field of study still barely explored and iconographic sources can help in this analysis.

### **1. The Hospitaller built heritage**

Rhodes was the Order's first capital, after the partial occupations of Acre and Cyprus, and before the founding of Birgu (then Vittoriosa) and Valletta on Malta. The Knights imposed a fortress-monastery on the Byzantine town, retaining its earlier division into two fortified areas: the Order's district or castrum to the north, the village or burgus to the south, where the Greeks were the majority. The street of the market as well as the walls divided the two main parts. While the castrum area remained almost unchanged, the Knights expanded the burgus and its fortifications until the middle of the fifteenth century [Kollias 1998].

The Hospitaller palaces were hierarchically organized along the Street of the Knights. At the foot of the street, there were the Latin cathedral with the Latin Bishop's residence, the hospital and the auberges of Auvergne and England Tongues; at the top, there were the Conventual church and the Magistral Palace; along the same street, there were the prestigious auberges of France, Italy and Spain Tongues. The Knights occupied the existing structures in the area, before building new palaces: the auberges too acquired an independent configuration (for the first time in the Order's history) after fusions and acquisitions. Sources show a general lack of monumentality and a great diversity of urban buildings, probably due to the need to set up a fortress-town than to a lack of resources: several buildings were founded or adapted after 1309 and probably were not different from the previous Byzantine ones. The burgus had an undifferentiated urban fabric: private houses had flat roofs; Latin churches had sloped roofs and the Greek ones featured a dome on a drum. There were few monumental buildings, such as a Metropolitan church, a Latin parish and the Greek Metropolitan's residence [Luttrell 2003].

Fifteenth-century iconography<sup>1</sup> and travel accounts confirm architectural sobriety and focused on logistical and military structures (walls and harbors). Except for the Order's palaces, churches were the greatest part of the urban built heritage: public and private places of worship, variously mentioned as *ecclesie* or *capelle*, were numerous inside and outside the walls<sup>2</sup>. We can group them into five plan typologies: single-aisle churches, which were often flanked by rooms; cross-shaped (both those central-plan and cross in square); tetraconch churches and basilicas. They are generally sober and typically small and show a clear blend of Byzantine and Gothic architectural elements [Maglio 2011].

## **2. The Ottoman town**

### **2.1 Islamization of the historic town**

The urban and architectural evolution of the Hospitaller town started with the Ottoman conquest in 1522. Because of the rarity of sources and the language of publication of researches (Greek or Turkish), there are few specific contributions on Ottoman Rhodes, which became a peripheral territory and lost its strategic importance. However, the analysis of travel narratives, iconography and surviving buildings, representing the most accessible sources, allowed to shed light on the urban Islamization process put in place during four centuries. The model of Mediterranean and Middle Eastern Islamic cities, based on the market as an "empty center" surrounded by public buildings and houses [Cuneo 1986], was exported to Rhodes and the town was adapted to the needs of the new inhabitants. The Turks exploited the existing structures and took the urban places of worship, turning them into mosques (*djami* or smaller *masdjid*) or houses. In some preeminent urban places, they founded mosques and hammam, and managed other urban structures (a *madrassa*, an *imâret*, the market, several prayer rooms and houses) by reusing the existing buildings. The market street (*çarşı*) was re-planned as a closed independent district, and some pious foundations were created with the system of *vakif*.

The Ottomans probably organized the urban fabric in residential units (*mahalla*) centered on a mosque, a school or a fountain: each *mahalla* was a closed elementary district [Cerasi 1988]. The *mahalla* in Rhodes related to the existing urban pattern and probably took the name of reference mosques: we assumed that each *djami* at least was the center of a *mahalla* (limited by the main urban streets), and that this role could have also been attributed to some of the most prestigious *masdjid* [Maglio 2012]. The new mosques, with their *qibla* oriented between 35° and 54° north east (the exact inclination, fixed as the direction of the Kaaba in Makkah, should be 56° north east), were a breaking element in the extremely regular urban fabric of the Hospitaller town, which retained the Greek urban layout oriented 5°. The surrounding urban fabric retained its orientation, but the establishment of new larger monuments modified the existing blocks. The mosques occupied a great part of them, causing the suppression of the northwestern edge of the blocks: the result was the creation of irregularly shaped squares, where ablution fountains were built.

The Jews generally occupied the Hospitaller houses, but the Turks took possession of the most prestigious mansions. Buildings suffered blockages and superelevations: additional windows and wooden *mashrabiyya* gave roads an oriental look; plaster layers covered the stone façades, changing the city's typical coloring; the existing courtyards were used as gardens. Suburban open areas, starting from the moat, housed Ottoman and Jewish cemeteries, plenty of decorated gravestones [Guérin 1856].

If fortifications remained almost unchanged, the main transformations concerned religious buildings. The Turks founded seven *djami* (mostly surviving today), having a typically Ottoman plan and

structure: one or more squared domed rooms, with a columned porch (rewak) endowed with small mihrâb, and one or more minarets. The mosques in Rhodes, with those in Ioannina, Thessaloniki and Athens, are the most relevant examples of the classic Empire period (sixteenth-seventeenth centuries) [Ottoman architecture 2008]. This architectural typology was developed in the fourteenth century in Iznik and Bursa with Seljuk prototypes and was reproduced with an increasing monumentality in Istanbul and the Balkans until the sixteenth century. Skilled builders and masons were involved in the construction of the mosques in Rhodes, but we know nothing about it. We assumed the existence of architectural and decorative elements coming from the central Ottoman Empire and the Iranian area, blended to Byzantine influences [Maglio 2011].

In addition to new buildings, churches suffered a systematic transformation and restyling: the external and internal surfaces were covered with colored plaster layers lying on *cocciopesto* and mortar; the interior space was modified by inserting a pulpit (minbar) and one or more prayer niches (mihrâb), which sometimes were the only decorative elements [Gabriel 1923]. In the former Latin cathedral, renamed Kantouri djami, the Turks built a minaret, two fountains and an elegant porch with three domes and vaulted spans. In eight former Christian churches, a new qibla wall was built, while in three prayer rooms the mihrâb was certainly carved in the existing masonry. In any case, the prayer niche was quite variably oriented compared to the direction of the Kaaba in Makkah, going from 30° to 89°: maybe for the need to adapt time and building requirements to the existing buildings, rather than for a lack of resources and skilled workers.

In conclusion, the urban skyline significantly changed since the first century of Ottoman rule: the numerous minarets belonging to the new founded mosques and to the former churches had to be the greatest visual and symbolic sign of a new rule and worship.

## 2.2 A souvenir town or a decadent town?

Iconography of the Ottoman town of Rhodes from the late sixteenth century generally reflected a little or no knowledge of places and directly resumed images of the late fifteenth century. They depicted a poorly characterized town with towers and rare crescents on the top of improbable bell towers (images by M. Rota in 1572 and S. Pinargenti in 1573), or a distorted urban shape up with no harbors (I. Garnich in 1615 and A. Myller in 1735). Travel accounts often based on hearsay information, such as that by G. Sandys, an English poet and diplomat (1658).

From the eighteenth century, precise representations of the town and its buildings multiplied (published in travel narratives, tourist guides and magazines) and contributed to spreading knowledge of the late Ottoman town and making it a travel destination. Iconography generally illustrated the search for medieval souvenirs within the Islamic town, which was now decadent. In fact, the period of stagnation of the Ottoman Empire in the eighteenth century, accompanied by a politico-economic crisis and the opposition of the major European powers, involved all the conquered territories in an inexorable decline. In the second half of the nineteenth century, moreover, several earthquakes hit Rhodes (1851 and 1863); the explosion of an ammunition dump destroyed what remained of the Conventual church (1856); finally, a serious fire damaged the town market and paralyzed trade for months (1864). The island became a place of exile for political prisoners (locked up in the Magistral Palace) and for quarantine (a lazaretto was outside the walled town).

To the eyes of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century European travelers, poverty and depopulation outwardly marked the town. According to M. de Choiseul-Gouffier, French Ambassador in Istanbul, who was in Rhodes in 1776, «la plus grande partie de la ville est déserte» [Vatin, Venistein 2004 and Aloï 2008, 63]. Nineteenth-century travel narratives all describe a town in decline, and abandoned, where the Turkish architecture and civilization had overlapped, crushing it, to the Medieval built heritage. Travelers made usually the same visit itinerary: the two harbors, the former castrum and the Street of the Knights (with the ruined Magistral Palace, the former Conventual church and Latin cathedral, the hospital and the auberges), the town walls observed by the moat, the bazar square and sometimes the Greek suburbs.

B.A.E. Rottiers, a French colonel who stayed in Rhodes in 1825-26, published a detailed report with several pictures. He was a privileged visitor since the Ottoman bey allowed him to visit and portray the Conventual church, but he had to keep away from the other mosques and from the town walls. The church, in particular, was in ruins and the drawings represented it «comme il était au moment où il fut converti en mosquée, n'ayant pas voulu y introduire les ornemens qui le défigurent aujourd'hui» [Rottiers 1828, 284-305] (Fig. 1). Rottiers also visited the Turkish cemetery, which was north of the town. In 1842 C. Cottu, a French Royal advisor, described the whole island as plunged into «une



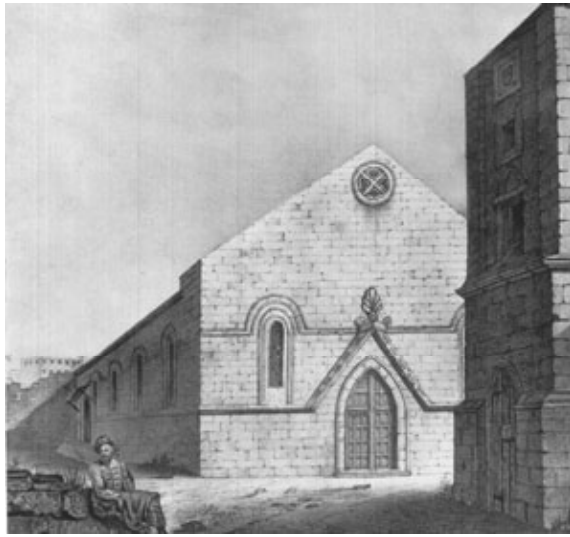


Fig. 1: Convent church, western front [Rottiers 1828, n. 40].

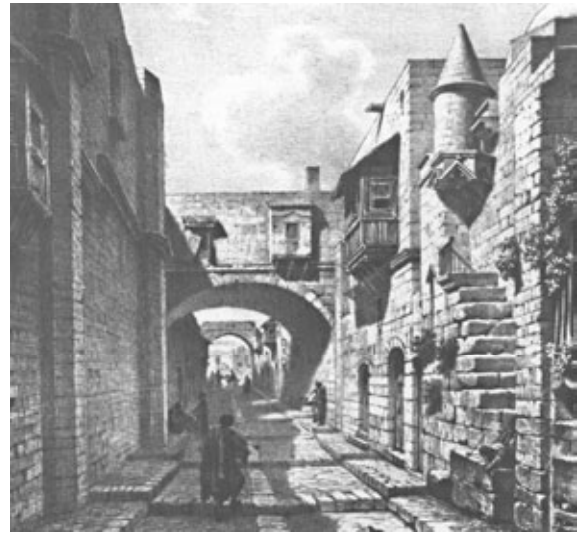


Fig. 2: Street of the Knights [Flandin 1844, n. 19].



Fig. 3: The commercial harbor [De Choiseul-Gouffier 1783, from <http://www.mapmogul.com>].



Fig. 4: The Latin cathedral (Kantouri djami) drawn by M. Paolini in 1940 [Presenza 1996, 238].

léthargie profonde»: the harbor of Rhodes was deserted and the Street of the Knights, an essential place to visit, appeared «déserte, remplie d'herbes et de pierres roulantes, [...] un amas de maisons turques ou juives» [Berchet 1985, 331-343]. In 1844, the French orientalist E. Flandin confirmed the state of abandonment of the main religious and civil Hospitaller monuments. Nineteenth-century pictures in travel accounts, in a full orientalist spirit, return us an Islamic town, finding its new fascination in a ruined and decadent architecture (Figg. 2-3).

### 3. Historic heritage during the Italian period

#### 3.1 Images of the town in literary production

At the dawn of the Italian occupation, the economic situation of the town was largely unchanged: according to Italian sources until the first half of the twentieth century, Rhodes was «un misero borgo levantino» decayed together with the Ottoman Empire [L'Italia a Rodi 1946, 2; Balducci 1932, 11-12].

Written and iconographic sources dating back to the Italian period until more recent times provide different images of the town and its monuments. On one hand, there are the travel reports until the '30s, giving a vivid description and a viewpoint more or less consistent with the Italian one, between orientalist curiosity and excitement for new colonial projects. The Italian geographer G. Dainelli was in Rhodes in 1920 and made a clear distinction between the 'Oriental Rhodes' and the 'Italian Rhodes'. In the first he recognized the charm «di quel mondo orientale che esercita una così sottile attrattiva», visiting the streets of the burgus and «quelle botteghe di caffè, ad osservare tutti quei tipi, – di turchi, di ebrei, di greci, di levantini, di europei, ai quali si mescola qualche uniforme di marinaio e di soldato nostri, – e ad ascoltare quella specie di torre di Babele delle molte lingue parlate». However, he outlined the contrast between that world and the one under construction just outside the northern town walls, where «per le finestre illuminate del "Circolo d'Italia" mi arriva la musica grottesca di un fox-trott». In the *Italian Rhodes*, instead, Dainelli found a great need of renewal, to recover the Hospitaller built heritage and achieve a stronger process of political, commercial and cultural development. Rhodes had to become a springboard to Italian colonial in Turkey and beach tourism seemed to be the key to make the town a pole of attraction for the whole Eastern Mediterranean [Dainelli 1923, 10-56].

There also were travelers only interested in Medieval and Ottoman buildings, as the French journalist and orientalist H. Célarié, who travelled to Rhodes in the early '30s. She focused on the ruins, such as those of the Magistral Palace («il ne reste qu'un mur lézardé, des créneaux décapités»), and the so-called turqueries. She was impressed by the Turkish women and the former Latin cathedral, still used as a mosque and having nothing Turkish but its minaret (Fig. 4). Her position was clear: «Pourquoi être l'ennemie de ce qui fait mon plaisir actuel? Avec leurs dômes peints, leurs minarets effilés, leurs beaux ifs fièrement plantés, les Osmanlis ont répandu sur la vieille ville des chevaliers un air d'orientalisme et de turquerie qu'on n'attendait pas et qui ravit, qui enchante» [Célarié 1933, 15-29]. Finally, there is a wide scientific production where writings, images and photographs were required to show and celebrate restoration, building and touristic activities carried out inside and outside the walled town: propaganda combined to scientific and cultural interests. In particular, iconography dating back to the first half of the twentieth century looked at the Hospitaller town with new eyes and purposes, especially from the moment when the Italians planned a new town next to it. Italy based its expansionist policy in the Levant on the recovery of the Roman Empire legacy, with the aim of restoring a supposed Mediterranean entity where an 'Italic zone' and an 'Aegean zone' were complementary and the concept of Mare Nostrum returned to be a central ideological-strategic axis for the fascism [Roletto 1939]. Hospitaller Rhodes was intended to return to be a Christian rampart under the fascism and became a true laboratory of new Italian urban and architectural practices. What was the idea of heritage and the strategies underlying such projects? How did iconography support those activities?

### 3.2 Historic buildings and new projects: the shifting of a city

First were considered the monuments of classical antiquity and the Hospitaller period, the only ones to be recognized as purely Roman and Italian. Following extensive archaeological campaigns, the ancient ruins were reassembled in a new Archaeological Museum, housed since 1916 in the Hospital of the Knights. As for the Hospitaller monuments, restorations generally provided to remove the Turkish additions considered to have no historical and artistic value, and integrated missing elements in order to achieve a philological reconstruction of a supposed medieval facies [Roletto 1939, 33]. The auberge of France Tongue was restored by the French architect A. Gabriel, coming from the École française d'Athènes (1913), and was based on the respect of the preexisting building, also on the basis of an accurate preliminary drawing [Gabriel 1923, vol. 2] (Fig. 5).

However, Italian restorations in the castrum (1914-1943) often became real reconstructions: as for the Magistral Palace, for example, rather arbitrary decisions intended to return a pure Italian Renaissance appearance deeply altered the monument [Mesturino 1978 and Presenza 1996]. The Ephorate of the Dodecanese, instead, began to carry out the restoration of Christian churches after 1950: the first Italian works, however, removed the Ottoman plaster layers, uncovering the old masonry and frescoes. Ciacci stated that a good part of the Hospitaller architectural heritage in the walled town is today a true 'false' and that after 1920 it became like a monument to contemplate.



*Fig. 5: The auberge of France Tongue before restoration [postcard of 1912] and today [a photo of 2009].*

Moreover, those restoration strategies were in accordance with the common practices of the time, aimed at return the stylistic unity of a monument although its original forms were not exactly known. We believe that the most significant matter was the a priori removal of Turkish elements in the civil buildings: other visual elements, in fact, remained and Ottoman buildings were preserved or restored, also because of a large Turkish community in the town [Miglioli, Savino 1987, 167]. Several minarets and ablution fountains, but also some mihrâb, stood out as “foreign” annexes and were often depicted in magazines and postcards (Fig. 6).

Based on a first topographic map of Rhodes (1917), the Royal Decree (1920) established the borders of the ‘Zona Monumentale’ as a no-building area: the walled town, the fortifications and the area outside the moat were equally concerned. Turkish and Jewish cemeteries outside the walls were removed and the whole area became a green belt [Miglioli, Savino 1987; Ciacci 1991]. The historic town was actually isolated from any subsequent planning action: the conservation and preservation of its architectural heritage became an opportunity, and perhaps even a pretext, to carry out a large-scale project in order to show the authority of colonial Italy. In conjunction with the decree, a “new” town began to be built north of the walls «con belle vie alberate, grandi piazze, giardini e passeggiate panoramiche, verso la Punta di Rodi, facendo centro sull’antico porto delle galere» [L’Italia a Rodi, 12]. Moreover, after the First World War, the walled town proved inadequate to the needs of the Italian community and its social and administrative functions.

The new settlement in the ‘Foro Italico’”, as they renamed the entire area, was established along the bay of the military harbor, where the Turkish Konak and other major buildings – houses and offices of the Ottoman Empire – had already housed the first Italian administrative and military offices since 1912. Starting from 1925, a monumental waterfront was created, in line with the contemporary projects in Tripoli and Algiers [Piccioli 1933], as a new ‘container’ of monuments and public buildings. There were the Government Palace, having an imaginative ‘Venetian Gothic’ style; the hospital and the Casa del Fascio; the new polygonal shaped market, with oriental architectural forms as a modern



Fig. 6: The urban mosques and an ablution fountain [postcards of 1934].



Fig. 7: A view of the "Foro Italico" and the new market [postcards of 1930].



Fig. 8: The "Albergo delle Rose" in its former appearance [postcard after 1925] and after restorations [postcard after 1936].

çarşı; the church of St. John, having the hypothetical forms of the Medieval Conventual church; several barracks and schools, the Bank of Italy, the Post Office and the Puccini theater (Fig. 7).

In order to make the town a touristic center, an airport was built and the harbor of Rhodes was renewed. Transformations in the northern end of the island also began in 1933: the nineteenth-century Cretan neighborhood and the Catholic cemetery were eliminated, in order to build a square, gardens, the Institute of Marine Biology and the Albergo delle Rose, together with a second luxury hotel, the Albergo delle Terme. However, despite the 1936 master plan intended to concern the whole suburban area, by integrating the smaller existing villages, the historic town of Rhodes and the new town, only a



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Fig. 9: St. John gate with Hospitaller coats of arms [postcard of 1914] and the restored Magistral Palace [postcard sent in 1956].

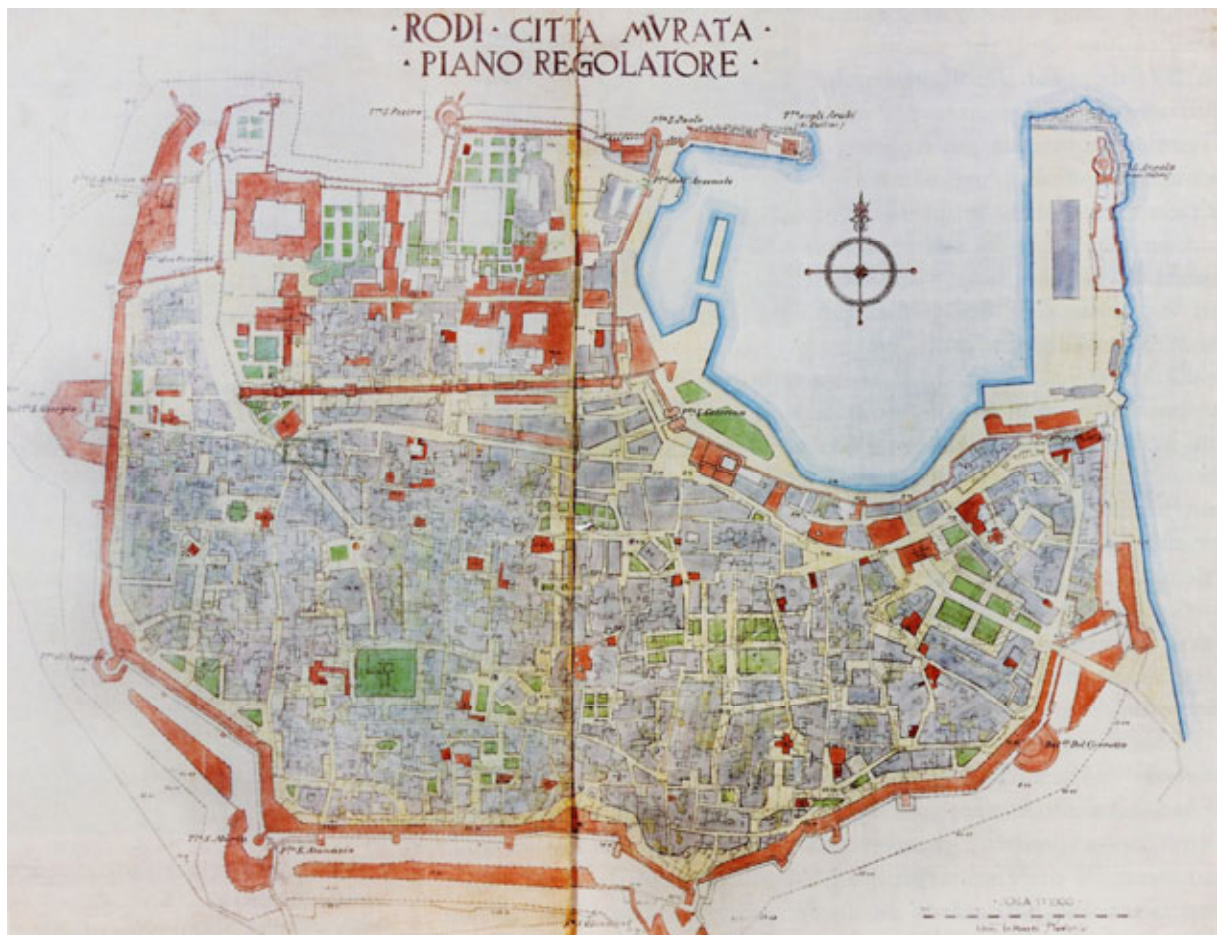


Fig. 10: Master plan of the historic town, 1936 [Office for the Conservation of Medieval Town, Rhodes].

complete road network was actually created, without information about public areas and services [Aloi 2008; Miglioli Savino 1987].

Finally, the fascistization of existing and new-planned buildings after 1936, intended to be «una bonifica totalitaria, spirituale e materiale del Possedimento» [Sertoli Salis 1939, 3], often altered the original oriental and exotic forms. Architects generally imitated the Hospitaller architecture, as in the Magistral Palace; elsewhere, in the Casa del Fascio and the Albergo delle Rose, the former eclectic style was replaced by geometric structures and pure volumes, typical of fascist architecture (Fig. 8); in

other buildings, such as the Government Palace, the War stopped those proposed changes [Miglioli, Savino 1987, 222-227].

### Final considerations

The town of Rhodes, then, was definitely 'reinvented' with the aims of propaganda and tourism: the historical Hospitaller and Ottoman heritage was largely exploiting and a new identity, the Italian town, was juxtaposed and overlapped a posteriori in the collective imagination: a true shifting of symbolic-geographic idea of city.

These transformations, as we have seen, can be read throughout the Italian period in texts and the images. Postcards until the '50s continued to convey two different faces of Rhodes, the historic and the Italian, as a double "oriental" and "colonial" reality that was ever closer to the readers. In some Italian magazines such as «L'illustrazione Italiana» and «La Lettura», then, the Italian economic and urban projects were constantly in the foreground, with special issues on Rhodes in 1926 [Ciacchi 1991]. In the eyes of the readers, there was an already consolidated image of a colonial town in full development, where Hospitaller-Turkish history and modernity (new architectures, but also new technologies and transport) equally participated in building a new urban identity (Fig. 9).

Concerning the evaluation of Italian activity in Rhodes, the great economic, political and cultural expectations were realized only in part: the Italian town, intended to be the 'Eastern rampart' of a rising empire, remained isolated, even if it prepared the ground for a subsequent renewal [*Italia a Rodi* 1946; Aloï 2008]. What we can say is that, to the light of iconographic and photographic sources, it is possible to understand not only the transformations of Rhodes architectural heritage, but also the transformation of the idea of heritage.

The original Hospitaller elements, such as carved coats of arms, urban gates and monuments, were always the most frequently portrayed, as shown by postcards of the first half of the 20th century and drawings [Presenza 1996; Gabriel 1923]. Symbols the Ottoman heritage, instead, were variously considered: iconography shows that some of them were removed because they were considered with no value, while others were preserved, like minarets, giving the urban skyline a fascinating oriental appearance.

In addition, after the first decrees of expropriation (1923), the first cadastral map of the historic town was elaborated (1928), emphasizing the desire to 'freeze' Medieval Rhodes and anticipating a new type of intervention on it. The master plan of the historic town (1934), in fact, not only classified all the urban monuments, but also graphically represented other planned activities: the redesign of open spaces and minor roads, and demolitions works especially around the main urban monuments. Therefore, the same town concerned by the Royal decree of 1920 became in fact an urban laboratory (Fig. 10). A few operations were effectively carried out only in the market street (*çarşı*), removing some shops, and in the nearby church of St. Mary of the burgus (1940-1944), which was blocked by Ottoman houses. In particular, the apse area was isolated through the opening of a new road, running through the old Jewish district until a new urban gate. Moreover, iconography can help in reconstructing those elements of the historic town, which no longer exist: missing or altered monuments demolished or bombed during the War [Gerola 1914; Gabriel 1923]. In this way, it can be possible to investigate urban space and architectural forms in Rhodes, such as religious topography and residential architecture, which remain poorly known. Through iconographic sources, then, it is possible to retrace the identity of historic town of Rhodes surviving today. Over the last three centuries, the town was at the same time a guardian and a breaker of its own identity: cancellation and reinvention, preservation and destruction, respect for the past and its use for other purposes, are responsible for what parts of the urban heritage have been preserved or lost.

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## Notes

<sup>1</sup> Paris, BnF, ms. lat. 6067 (CAOURSIN, G. (1482). *Obsidionis Rhodiae urbis Descriptio*, ff. 18r, 30v, 58r, 68v. Karlsruhe, Landesbibliothek, cod. St. Peter pap. 32 (GRÜNEMBERG, K. (1486). *Bericht über die Pilgerfahrt ins Hl. Land*), ff. 20v-21r.

<sup>2</sup> See some relevant documents in Malta, National Library: cod. 53 (*Liber Bullarum*, 1497), ff. 11v-12r, «ecclesia Sancti Michaelis Castelli Rhodi» and f. 28r, «ecclesiam siue capellam Sancti Simeonis»; cod. 362 (*Liber Bullarum*, 1450), f. 183v, «capellam siue ecclesiam Sancti Elefterij».